

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

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FM AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4337

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUXEMBOURG 0203

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XF, EEC

SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER COMMENTS ON PLO PRESENCE IN EURO-ARAB
DIALOGUE

1. PRIME MINISTER THORN TOLD ME ON MARCH 20 THAT HE HAD
BEEN UNPLEASANTLY SURPRISED DURING HIS VISIT TO TUNIS MARCH
5-8 (ACCOMPANYING THE GRAND DUKE ON A STATE VISIT) TO FIND
BOURGUIBA AND OTHER HIGH TUNISIAN OFFICIALS UNALTERABLY
OPPOSED TO THE "DENATIONALIZED" FORMULA FOR PRELIMINARY
EURO-ARAB CONTACTS. THORN WAS TOLD BY THE TUNISIAN LEADERS
THAT NOW IS THE TIME TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO STRENGTHEN
ARAFAT WHO IS THE BEST HOPE FOR MODERATE LEADERSHIP OF THE
PLO. ALTHOUGH SADAT FAVORS THE DENATIONALIZED FORMULA,
BOURGUIBA SAID THAT THE EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT WOULD HAVE
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TO GO ALONG WITH THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE ARAB

LEAGUE FAVORABLE TO A DISTINCT PALESTINIAN IDENTITY
AT ALL STAGES OF THE EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE.

2. THORN ADDED THAT HE FELT OBLIGED TO REPEAT TO ME
HIS PREVIOUSLY EXPRESSED SENTIMENT THAT ARAFAT DOES
REPRESENT THE MOST ACCEPTABLE LEADER ON THE PALESTINIAN
SCENE. DESPITE HIS UNDERSTANDING FOR THE USG'S RELUC-
TANCE TO DEAL WITH THE PLO, THORN EXPLAINED THAT THE EC
MIGHT DO WELL TO ENCOURAGE ARAFAT PERSONALLY, WHILE NOT
ENDORISING ALL THE PLO DEMANDS. THORN SAID THAT HE FEARS
AN EXTREMIST TAKE-OVER OF THE PLO IF ARAFAT RECEIVES
INSUFFICIENT INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION. THORN LIKENED
THE CURRENT PLO SITUATION TO THE MAGHREB UPRISINGS IN
THE 1950S WHERE EXTREMIST ELEMENTS SOMETIMES REPLACED
MODERATE LEADERS IF THE NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS REMAINED LONG
UNRECOGNIZED BY THE COLONIAL POWER.FARKAS

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